UNITED NATIONS

General Assembly

FORTY-SIXTH SESSION

Official Records

THIRD COMMITTEE
28th meeting
held on
Monday, 4 November 1991
at 10 a.m.
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 28th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. AL-SHAALI (United Arab Emirates)

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AGENDA ITEM 96: NARCOTIC DRUGS (continued)

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8 November 1991

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The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 96: NARCOTIC DRUGS (continued) (A/C.3/46/3, chap. VI, sect. E; A/46/222, 264, 336, 338, 480 and 511)

1. Mr. JOUSHAN (Afghanistan) said that although the international community had redoubled its efforts to combat drug abuse and illicit trafficking in recent years, inter alia, through the holding of the 1987 International Conference on Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking and the seventeenth special session of the General Assembly and the entry into force of the Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, the problem had become world-wide in scope. To fight a common problem, a common effort was needed.

2. Unfortunately, the prolonged war in Afghanistan had created conditions where poppy growers and narcotics producers and smugglers could thrive. Because of the close link between arms shipments and drug trafficking, as soon as the United States and the Soviet Union had cut arms supplies to the warring factions, the President of Afghanistan had proposed the establishment of an effective mechanism for controlling arms shipments at the country's borders which could also help to prevent drug trafficking. More financial assistance from the United Nations would be welcome for that purpose.

3. He reiterated the proposals made by his delegation at the forty-fifth session for the establishment of a special commission to draft a comprehensive plan of action to combat the illicit supply and trafficking of narcotic drugs from areas bordering on Afghanistan and Pakistan, the convening of an international conference or other regional arrangement to find ways of intensifying the fight against the illicit production, trafficking and use of narcotic drugs in the region and the establishment of an office of the United Nations Fund for Drug Abuse Control (UNFDAC) in Afghanistan.

4. His Government had launched a comprehensive anti-drug campaign under which, for the first time, information about the destructive health consequences of drug abuse had been included in school and university curricula. A new anti-drug law had recently been adopted to combat, inter alia, the cultivation of opium poppy and hashish bushes. Enforcement was very difficult, however, given the remote terrain where such crops were cultivated. The Government was prepared, in cooperation with United Nations agencies, to look for ways of encouraging peasants to stop drug cultivation voluntarily.

5. His delegation fully supported United Nations activities for drug abuse control and would welcome any international assistance with its domestic efforts.

6. Mr. KRENKEL (Austria) said that in the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNIDCP) the United Nations had finally found an adequate response to the growing threat from illegal activities involving narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances. It had been at the forefront in calling for a balanced approach to international drug abuse control through control of supply, prevention of illicit trafficking, reduction of demand, and treatment and rehabilitation.

7. His Government was particularly concerned with reducing illicit demand, and the consensus among Austrian experts was that drug abuse was in most cases conditioned by psychosocial factors. In order to achieve lasting success in demand reduction repressive regulations were not enougoh: the causes of drug abuse, such as youth unemployment, must be addressed. Young people must also be informed about the dangers and consequences of drug abuse. Preventive measures such as early diagnosis of young people who were at risk and employment and leisure programmes were also planned, in addition to treatment and help with social reintegration.

8. Money laundering in connection with illicit drug trafficking had become a world-wide phenomenon and to combat it in only some countries or regions would be futile; those responsible would simply use other countries or regions. A global response was needed and UNIDCP would be the ideal framework for an effective world-wide effort against money laundering.

9. The role of UNIDCP as the focal point for a comprehensive drug control strategy did not mean that the Programme must be involved in each and every undertaking. It was imperative, however, that all multilateral and bilateral initiatives should be supportive of an agreed strategy of which UNIDCP acted as the international sponsor and custodian. The Programme should ensure coordination among organizations and Governments, and in that context its admission to the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC) was very important. Lastly, a result-oriented approach to the mandates of UNIDCP was essential.

10. Mr. CEPEDA (Colombia) said that the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNIDCP) must serve as a catalyst for practical, effective international cooperation in combating the drug problem in all its aspects. A synchronized strategy was the key to success. Simultaneous and coherent action on all fronts was essential if the problem was not simply to shift to other regions. In addition to controlling supply, reducing demand, preventing illicit trafficking and providing treatment and rehabilitation, it was necessary to focus on chemical precursors and on international financial complicity with the drug trade.

11. UNIDCP could not fulfil its obligations without adequate means to confront the emergency. It was necessary to expand its regular budget, ensure a balanced allocation of funds among the various strategies, and increase voluntary contributions so as to expand operational programmes and technical assistance. In that connection, there was a tremendous contrast between the

(Mr. Cepeda, Colombia)

dimensions of the problem and the limited resources used at the international level to combat it. The international community must come up with initiatives for ensuring the availability of funding on a more predictable and stable basis. Such funding could be obtained through the anti-drug campaign itself, which would facilitate the formulation of future-oriented projects.

12. The Commission on Narcotic Drugs should formulate guidelines for UNIDCP and supervise its activities. Colombia attached great importance to the Global Programme of Action, which provided a set of policies ranging from prevention to law enforcement and struck a balance based on shared international responsibility. The UNIDCP Division for Operational Activities and the Technical Services Division were particularly important components of the new structure. The programmes and technical sections referred to in the report of the Secretary-General (A/46/480), particularly in paragraphs 17 and 18, should also cover all the strategies included in the Global Programme of Action, particularly those relating to drug money, illegal use of the banking system and diversion of chemical products to illicit purposes.

13. The Inter-Organization Cooperation Division of UNIDCP had an important role to play in coordinating the efforts of the different bodies and agencies and in preventing duplication. His delegation shared the view that development agencies should be made more aware of the drug problem. Leadership and coordination by UNIDCP in ensuring that the programmes of UNDP, the World Bank and similar institutions included that dimension would be a vital aspect of a synchronized strategy. Lastly, it was essential that the United Nations draft an international convention on the reduction of illicit demand. The Declaration adopted at the World Ministerial Summit to Reduce the Demand for Drugs and to Combat the Cocaine Threat, held in London, would facilitate that task.

14. His Government followed a realistic and pragmatic policy of international cooperation to promote a multilateral, bilateral and national action to combat the various aspects of illicit drug trafficking. All countries must be involved and the costs must be shared equitably. Colombia was making a great effort to promote international coordination and was also promoting judicial cooperation mechanisms. It had concluded judicial cooperation agreements with a number of countries and saw the Vienna Convention as an important step towards global anti-drug legislation. His Government would be submitting the Convention to the newly elected Congress for consideration.

15. The Rio Group had decided to set up a commission of legal experts to design a criminal law framework for harmonizing member countries' domestic legislation. Colombia was in favour of promoting a dialogue to investigate the feasibility of establishing an international criminal court to try persons accused of involvement in drug trafficking.

16. The second international anti-drug summit, to be held in February 1992 with the participation of the United States of America, the Andean Group

(Mr. Cepeda, Colombia)

countries and other specially invited countries, would be a further landmark in regional cooperation and would make it possible to evaluate the progress made. The common goals set forth in the 1990 Cartagena Declaration were being steadily achieved. Cocaine consumption in the United States had declined, the drug mafias had come under attack and drug trafficking routes had been intercepted. In Colombia, 10 times as many tons of cocaine had been seized in 1990 as in 1985 and severe blows had been dealt to the drug cartels. However, the international community must pursue a synchronized strategy in order to ensure that the progress made in some countries was not undermined by continuing drug activities in others.

17. Mr. SZYMANSKI (Poland) said that drug abuse and illicit trafficking remained an enormous global problem. The control of precursors and essential chemicals used in the illicit manufacture of narcotic drugs posed a real challenge to the International Narcotics Control Board and to national administrations. His Government was willing to offer the services of its experts to the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNIDCP). At its eleventh special session, the Commission on Narcotic Drugs had made an important contribution towards reorienting United Nations activities related to narcotic drugs. To fulfil its tasks, the Commission had proposed that it should meet annually in regular session. His Government fully supported that proposal.

18. Poland had a special interest in drug issues because of its domestic problems of drug abuse and the use of its territory for the illicit production, export and transit of psychotropic substances. All activities to combat drug abuse and illicit trafficking in Poland took into account the guidelines set forth in the Global Programme of Action and the Comprehensive Multidisciplinary Outline of Future Activities in Drug Abuse Control.

19. The main drug of abuse in Poland was a homemade extract derived form poppy straw. Measures introduced several years earlier to limit poppy plant cultivation had considerably reduced unauthorized access to poppy straw by addicts. At the same time, high-morphine varieties of poppy plant were being replaced by low-morphine varieties, which were of no use to addicts. In that way, Poland hoped to maintain the production of poppy seed without the risks arising from the illicit use of poppy straw. That novel approach to crop substitution deserved support under UNIDCP.

20. Restrictions on access to poppy straw coupled with extensive educational campaigns on the dangers of drug abuse had helped bring about a noticeable decrease in the number of new addicts in Poland. The spread of HIV infections among existing addicts was becoming a very serious problem, however. Although health authorities and voluntary organizations carried out various measures of prevention and assistance, those were not adequate to the extent of the problem.

(Mr. Szymanski, Poland)

21. Poland had become a small-scale producer of amphetamine, which was being smuggled to the Scandinavian countries and Germany. Polish police authorities were cooperating with the relevant authorities in those countries and with Interpol to interdict shipments and punish such activities. A number of seizures had been made and it was expected that it would be possible to eliminate that source of illicit substances. Although hampered by the limited resources provided for combating drug abuse and illicit trafficking, Poland was convinced that its contribution would help international efforts in that field to succeed.

The meeting rose at 11.05 a.m.

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UNITED NATIONS

General Assembly

FORTY-SIXTH SESSION

Official Records

THIRD COMMITTEE
29th meeting
held on
Monday, 4 November 1991
at 3 p.m.
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 29th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. AL-SHAALI (United Arab Emirates)

CONTENTS

AGENDA ITEM 96: NARCOTIC DRUGS (continued)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 96: NARCOTIC DRUGS (continued) (A/46/222, 264, 336, 338, 480 and 511)

1. Mr. BANDARA (Sri Lanka) said that, although doctors had used them for centuries to relieve pain, narcotic drugs, when abused, presented a danger to society. As the Secretary-General had said at the special session of the General Assembly devoted to narcotic drugs, the results of drug abuse were severe damage to health, disruption of society and economic breakdown, the undermining of democratic institutions, corruption, intimidation, violence and death.

2. Since 1909, when a commission had met in Shanghai, to recommend the adoption of international agreements, nations had recognized that trafficking in narcotic drugs was an international problem that called for close cooperation in a number of areas. During the past decade, the problem had become even more serious, as drugs were often sold illegally to purchase guns and other military equipment for use in terrorist activities.

3. The war against drug trafficking could not be fought by individual countries alone; it must be fought by all nations collectively. His delegation appreciated the work done thus far by the United Nations drug abuse control units based at Vienna, and it wholeheartedly supported all efforts being made to strengthen the pivotal role of the United Nations in the global war against drug abuse. It noted that the United Nations had restructured the institutional arrangements, by amalgamating, inter alia, the United Nations Fund for Drug Abuse Control and the Division of Narcotic Drugs into a single entity, the United Nations International Drug Control Programme, headed by an Under-Secretary-General.

4. At its seventeenth special session, the General Assembly had adopted a Political Declaration and a Global Programme of Action against illicit production, supply, demand, trafficking and distribution of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances. The success of the Global Programme of Action in eradicating the drug problem would depend largely on the action taken by all Governments at the national, regional and global levels. International cooperation in that regard was essential, and could be achieved through bilateral, regional and multilateral efforts.

5. With respect to his own region, he said that, at the summit meeting held in Male in 1990, the seven member nations of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) had signed a regional convention on narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances and five of them, including Sri Lanka, had already ratified it. Once it came into effect, the convention would certainly contribute positively to global efforts to eradicate the drug scourge.

(Mr. Bandara, Sri Lanka)

6. In March 1991, Sri Lanka had hosted a meeting of representatives of law enforcement agencies of SAARC. In addition, during the forthcoming summit meeting, there would be a seminar for journalists of the SAARC region.

7. There was much concern in Sri Lanka about the increased drug abuse among young people between 19 and 35 years of age. In 1990, arrests for heroin-related offences had been up 60 per cent over the 1989 figures; 50 per cent of those sentenced to prison in 1990 had been sentenced for drug-related offences.

8. The National Dangerous Drugs Control Board operated three centres for the treatment and rehabilitation of addicts in Colombo, Kandy and Galle, three of the principal cities in Sri Lanka. In addition, there were several other centres run by non-governmental organizations. A large number of volunteers, health educators, psychiatric and medical officers, officers of the police, customs and prisons and probation officers had been given theoretical and practical training in relevant aspects of treatment and rehabilitation of drug addicts. The National Dangerous Drugs Control Board had also organized an awareness programme for parliamentarians, a seminar for all magistrates in Sri Lanka, directed at improving enforcement of the drug laws, and a large number of programmes for youth. In addition, the Board had used the mass media and a few non-governmental organizations for awareness programmes.

9. Sri Lanka had signed and ratified the 1961 Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs and the 1972 Protocol amending that Convention. It had been associated with the Commission on Narcotic Drugs from the beginning in the drafting of, and had acceded to, the Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances. Furthermore, it reported significant drug seizures each month to the United Nations Division of Narcotic Drugs and also consistently provided information concerning drug traffic and trends to INTERPOL headquarters and to concerned countries. The Customs Department regularly reported drug detections to the regional liaison office in Hong Kong and liaised with the Customs Cooperation Council and other international organizations.

10. With a view to implementing the United Nations conventions and other requirements, Parliament would shortly be enacting amendments to the legislation covering various aspects of the illicit traffic in drugs. His Government had approved a national policy prepared by the National Dangerous Drugs Control Board, thereby reaffirming its political will and determination to combat the drug menace by formulating effective strategies based on enforcement, preventive education and public awareness, treatment, rehabilitation and after-care and international and regional cooperation.

11. In conclusion, he said that Sri Lanka was grateful for the financial assistance provided to it by the United Nations Fund for Drug Abuse Control and by UNDP for a project relating to the prevention and treatment of drug abuse and one aimed at institutionalizing a system to monitor trends in drug

(Mr. Bandara, Sri Lanka)

abuse. It was also grateful for the assistance given by a number of organizations and countries to help Sri Lanka combat drug-related problems.

12. Mr. AL-ABDULLAH (Qatar) said that, notwithstanding the measures taken by Governments to combat the drug problem, organizations of drug traffickers were spreading to countries which had previously been free of such organizations, precisely in response to those measures. Drug abuse and illicit drug trafficking was therefore a problem which affected all countries and all social classes; it also affected international security and weakened the economic and institutional structure of all nations. Moreover, it served to transmit the AIDS virus, particularly among young people who were supposed to be the hope for the future.

13. In its resolution 45/149 concerning international action to combat drug abuse and illicit trafficking the General Assembly had pointed to the damage caused by drug abuse and illicit trafficking and to the ties between drug trafficking and international criminal organizations and terrorism and corruption. Accordingly, the Assembly had considered the possibility of establishing an international tribunal to deal with that type of offence.

14. Drug abuse was so widespread that attempts to eradicate it must be undertaken collectively through the adoption of international measures at all levels. The Political Declaration and Global Programme of Action represented one important such effort by the international community. Another was the establishment, in accordance with Assembly resolution 45/179, of the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNIDCP).

15. Qatar supported all international efforts being made in connection with the drug problem, since it was fully aware that action to combat drugs must be conducted through international cooperation. Based on that principle, Qatar had acceeded to the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances.

16. Drugs were not a social problem in Qatar because Islam forbade their use and because the penalties for infractions were very harsh.

17. The reasons for the expansion of illicit trafficking included developments in the communications technologies and in the means of production, marketing and financing, as well as the enormous sums of money generated by such trafficking. With that money, traffickers had been able to intimidate and threaten the law enforcement and anti-drug organizations. In addition, there was no doubt that international terrorism was directly linked to illicit drug and arms trafficking.

18. For the war on that scourge to succeed, it was necessary for the international community to attack on various fronts. First, the campaign against illicit trafficking in narcotic drugs should include the enforcement of stringent sanctions against traffickers, the confiscation of their

(Mr. Al-Abdullah, Qatar)

property, the surveillance of their movements and the enforcement of all applicable international instruments, no matter where the traffickers were found. Second, to reduce drug consumption, it was necessary make use of all available communications media, as well as youth education programmes and programmes to rehabilitate drug addicts. Third, with respect to drug production, assistance should be given to the countries that grew the raw materials for drugs, since their problem was essentially an economic one. Those countries could not discontinue production unless they were given access to international markets and could provide economic opportunities for their young people so that they could raise their standard of living. Those problems could only be resolved through the joint efforts of the international community, represented by the United Nations.

19. In conclusion, he wished to emphasize the work accomplished by the International Narcotics Control Board and other United Nations bodies, as well as by the specialized agencies, in their respective areas of competence. He stressed the work of the United Nations Fund for Drug Abuse Control, which provided financing for all those activities, as well as of all the organizations that assisted in that financing. He also called attention to the bilateral Agreement signed in May 1991 between the United States and Peru and to the measures adopted by the international community to open up European markets to Latin American products.

20. Mrs. KABA-CAMARA (Côte d'Ivoire) said that, with its focus on narcotic drugs, the seventeenth special session of the General Assembly had given fresh impetus to the general movement to intensify the anti-drug campaign at all levels, under the coordination of the United Nations. At that session, for instance, the General Assembly had proclaimed the period from 1991 to 2000 the United Nations Decade against Drug Abuse (resolution S-17/2, para. 29). The Political Declaration and Global Programme of Action adopted at the close of the session had created a international holy alliance for the eradication of drugs. To free the world from that scourge, which ignored boundaries, religion and social class, it was necessary to show proof of collective responsibility and to rise above the mutual recriminations between consumer and producer countries that prevented the adoption of really extensive measures.

21. The establishment of the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNIDCP) was the result of joint efforts at the national, regional and international levels to respond definitively and forcefully, with a unified structure, to the threat which drugs posed to the social equilibrium. The Programme had four main components corresponding to the four basic concerns, namely, implementation of legal instruments, operational activities, technical services and interorganizational cooperation.

22. In the legal sphere, the international community had adopted adequate legal instruments aimed at reducing supply and demand, punishing traffickers, achieving the rehabilitation and social reintegration of drug addicts, and prohibiting the laundering of drug money.

(Mrs. Kaba-Camara, Côte d'Ivoire)

23. The 1988 United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, which had entered into force in November 1990, supplemented the Single Convention of 1961, the 1972 Protocol and the 1971 Convention on Psychotropic Substances. Her delegation supported the idea of amending the 1971 Convention with a view to including a larger number of substances in the authorization system in order to avoid illicit trafficking in licit drugs. Côte d'Ivoire was a Party to all those instruments and had signed the 1988 Convention, which was in the process of ratification.

24. While it was necessary to intensify pressure on crucial points by rapidly attacking the major links in the production chain - consumption and trafficking - it would be unwise to overlook the weaker links, which might be the next target of the traffickers. Africa was increasingly prone to becoming one of the new trafficking centres, since the many problems that beset it - including political instability, civil war, social discontent caused by generalized poverty, and a shortage of material and human resources to organize the campaign against drug trafficking and abuse - had led to a resurgence of that scourge and an increase in the number of its victims.

25. Her delegation supported the initiatives taken by UNIDCP in setting up laboratories, organizing training seminars for pharmaceutical inspectors and police officials responsible for narcotic drug law enforcement action, and giving practical courses on the education of the population and the social rehabilitation of drug addicts. While important, those measures were insufficient to meet Africa's tremendous needs. In that connection, it was important to strengthen cooperation between the Economic Commission for Africa and UNIDCP and between regional organizations such as the West African Economic Community and UNIDCP.

26. In recent years, Côte d'Ivoire had improved border controls, destroyed illicit crops and adopted legislative provisions to increase the penalties for drug trafficking. As a natural transit country, owing to its geographical position, it needed the assistance of the international community in order to use the information networks and train specialists in measures to combat narcotic drugs. Despite its efforts to prevent drug abuse by educating the population and disseminating information on its dangers, the number of victims was growing, especially among the unemployed and the young, and the shortage of financial resources cruelly impeded their treatment and social rehabilitation.

27. Her delegation supported the recommendation of the Intergovernmental Expert Group to Study the Economic and Social Consequences of Illicit Traffic in Drugs (A/46/338) calling for the development of an estimate of trends in drug abuse, including regular analytical studies of all aspects of drug trafficking, production and consumption and of issues such as money laundering related to illicit drug trafficking and the control of substances used in the manufacture of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances.

(Mrs. Kaba-Camara, Côte d'Ivoire)

28. With regard to money laundering, she welcomed the specific recommendations made by the seven major industrialized countries and said that, according to a study published by the Department of Public Information (DPI), only 15 per cent of the income generated by drug trafficking remained in the producer countries. Most of the income was deposited in banks in Europe, the United States and the Caribbean.

29. Her delegation took note of document A/46/222, concerning the Agreement between the Governments of Peru and the United States of America on drug control and alternative development policy, which authorized the seizure of assets from individuals and organizations devoted to narcotic trafficking and using such assets for the benefit of the counternarcotics activities of the Peruvian State. That provision was of great importance because, for the first time, the use of frozen assets from drug trafficking was being authorized for the fight against drugs. However, that principle should be applied not only to the money which remained in the producer countries, but to all the income derived from trafficking in narcotic drugs. The 85 per cent which remained in the consumer countries should be deposited in an escrow account, similar to the one administered by the Secretary-General under Security Council resolution 706 (1991), which consisted of funds from the sale of Iraqi petroleum to be used for Iraq's basic civilian needs. All the frozen assets of drug traffickers could be deposited in an account of that nature. The funds could be used to finance international action against drugs, and such related activities as rural and social development, which would be a satisfactory solution to the difficulty of providing resources for the Fund of UNIDCP. If the countries which received drug money were not in a position to part with it completely, they could at least devote a portion of it to financing the activities of UNIDCP, as proof of their political will to contribute to an all-out war on drugs.

30. Mr. HUANG Yongan (China) said that combating drugs was the shared responsibility of the producer, the consumer and the transit countries. In order to overcome drug abuse and illicit trafficking, it was essential to reduce the illicit demand for drugs. It was incumbent on the major consumer countries to work out a comprehensive campaign against drugs. For their part, the producer countries should make efforts to reduce illicit drug cultivation and trafficking. China considered that a policy which combined drug control and development would be of great assistance to the developing countries in their struggle against drugs.

31. The work of the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNIDCP) should focus on the implementation of the Comprehensive Multidisciplinary Outline of Future Activities in Drug Abuse Control (CMO), formulated in 1987, and the Global Programme of Action adopted at the seventeenth special session of the General Assembly. Those countries and organizations which had economic resources should increase their voluntary contributions to the global campaign against drugs. UNIDCP should fulfil the tasks entrusted to it efficiently and should apply the principle of equitable geographical distribution to personnel recruitment.

(Mr. Huang Yongan, China)

32. China had a tradition of struggle against the scourge of drugs. That tradition had enabled it to show determination in the face of the use by international drug traffickers of certain border provinces as transit zones, mainly for heroin. Thus, China had adopted a series of measures: strengthening the role of anti-drug bodies at the national level; enacting legislation of great significance for the control of drug-related criminal activities; mobilizing and organizing all sectors of society to prohibit drug abuse, cultivation and trafficking through a comprehensive drug control programme; strengthening interdiction and law-enforcement measures; and, lastly, carrying out an extensive educational campaign on the dangers of drugs.

33. Moreover, the Chinese Government attached great importance to regional and international cooperation in drug control. In response to a United Nations initiative to strengthen subregional cooperation, China had actively participated in drug control efforts in the "Golden Triangle" area. The Governments of China and Myanmar and the United Nations had held an exchange of views and had signed the Beijing Memorandum. It was to be hoped that such cooperation would yield positive results and would enhance relations between China and the United Nations.

34. Mr. SLABY (Czechoslovakia) said that while Czechoslovakia, situated in the heart of Europe had, from the point of view of illicit drug trafficking, been mainly a transit country so far, drug traffickers were increasingly using the so-called "Balkan Route" and were trying to involve Czechoslovak citizens in their illegal activities. That trend had recently been confirmed by the confiscation of several drug shipments and by the detention of certain internationally wanted drug traffickers.

35. While drug abuse in Czechoslovakia had not reached as alarming proportions as in other European countries, the authorities did not underestimate the danger of the spread of drugs. Accordingly, a government commission, headed by the Deputy Prime Minister, had been appointed to coordinate activities in the field of drug abuse prevention, treatment of drug addicts and suppression of trafficking.

36. In the international sphere, Czechoslovakia had recently ratified the 1972 Protocol to the 1961 Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs. Likewise, it had become a party to the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances. Moreover, it had renewed its membership in the International Criminal Police Organization, (INTERPOL) and intended to conclude bilateral agreements with various countries with a view to suppressing drug abuse and illicit trafficking. For example, it had begun to cooperate with the United States and had held consultations with various Western European countries.

37. Czechoslovakia supported Economic and Social Council resolution 1991/39 wherein it had been decided that the Commission on Narcotic Drugs should meet

(Mr. Slaby, Czechoslovakia)

annually for a period not exceeding eight working days, and resolution 1991/49, by which it had been decided to increase the membership of the Commission from 40 to 53. Those measures were in keeping with the need to strengthen international measures to combat the illicit production of, trafficking in, and consumption of narcotic drugs and psychotrophic substances. Czechoslovakia, which had taken part in the work of the Commission as an observer, was interested in becoming a full member of the Commission.

38. Czechoslovakia appreciated the work of the former United Nations Fund for Drug Abuse Control and wished to participate actively in some of the programmes of the new Fund of UNIDCP. In that connection, it had decided to make its first financial contribution to the Fund.

39. Mrs. SKOWRON-OLSZOWSKA (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)) said that, in order to reduce the demand for drugs, UNESCO was encouraging the introduction of elements of preventive education into school curriculums. To that end, UNESCO was implementing and monitoring extra-budgetary projects, financially supported by the United Nations International Drug Control Programme and its Fund, in Africa, Asia and the Caribbean subregion, and projects were also foreseen for the Latin American region.

40. Moreover, in cooperation with United Nations agencies and other international organizations, UNESCO was involved in a series of awareness-raising activities such as the launching of an international drawing contest for children on the theme of preventive education against drug abuse as well as the proclamation of the United Nations Decade against Drug Abuse 1991-2000.

41. To ensure maximum effectiveness of preventive efforts world wide, UNESCO provided methodological support for publications and research as well as an exchange of pedagogical material on strategies and methods in that field. Regarding preventive educational techniques applicable in developing countries, UNESCO had been undertaking research in collaboration with specialized non-governmental organizations. A methodological guide for western Africa was being prepared on the basis of two surveys conducted in Ghana and Senegal. A report on socio-cultural and economic factors linked to drug abuse in the Pokuase region of Ghana had been produced in the framework of an operational project carried out in that country. Moreover, a newsletter and an annotated bibliography, and a directory of preventive education against drug-taking, were to be produced in cooperation with the Commission of the European Communities.

42. UNESCO provided technical and financial assistance to member States for the training of drug abuse control agents. In the current year, support was being given to Ghana, Senegal and Argentina. Document A/46/511 offered a more detailed account of the activities undertaken by UNESCO; it should also be

(Mrs. Skowron-Olszowska, UNESCO)

noted that Colombia was receiving $98,000 in 1991 from UNESCO's International Programme for the Development of Communication (IPDC) to implement a mass media programme on the subject of drugs. The total cost of the project was estimated at over half a million dollars, and IPDC was therefore seeking financial support from funds-in-trust for the balance.

43. With regard to the coordination of the work of the relevant United Nations agencies in the fight against drug abuse, UNESCO fully supported the role of UNIDCP. UNESCO'S regular budget devoted to its drug-related programme had been tripled, and human resources for that programme had also been significantly increased. The General Conference, at its current session, had adopted a resolution to strengthen UNECSO's preventive education programme against drug abuse.

44. Mrs. BASNYAT (Nepal) said that the problem of drug abuse and illicit trafficking remained one of the most persistent and complex problems of the current era. No State could claim immunity from that scourge, which not only caused immense suffering to individuals but also undermined the foundations of nations, hampered their development activities and posed a threat to international peace and security.

45. Since drugs were highly lucrative for those engaged in production and trafficking, the phenomenon of drug abuse showed no sign of abatement and much less of elimination. The vast fortunes which were being amassed were being used to bribe political leaders and to train narco-terrorists to subvert the activities of law enforcement agencies. Political assassinations and violent conflicts associated with drug abuse were increasingly on the rise.

46. As the problem of drug abuse grew in intensity, the international community was showing a growing resolve to fight that menace. At the global level the United Nations was playing a pivotal role in the fight against drug abuse. The International Conference on Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking, held in 1987, had led to the adoption of a Comprehensive Multidisciplinary Outline of Future Activities in Drug Abuse Control. Later in 1988, the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances had been adopted and, in 1990, a special session of the General Assembly had been held culminating in the adoption of a Global Programme of Action which demonstrated the urgency accorded to collective action at all levels.

47. International treaties were effective only when States committed themselves to implementing the provisions contained in them. Her delegation called upon States that had not yet done so to accede to or ratify all the conventions adopted by the United Nations to combat the scourge of drug abuse and to take urgent steps to implement their provisions in their national legislations. Moreover, the transboundary nature of the problem required not only global but also regional cooperation. Since its establishment, the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) had identified drug abuse

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as one of its areas of cooperation. Nepal had ratified the SAARC Convention on Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, which had come into force on 23 November 1990. It had also ratified the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, adopted at Vienna in 1988.

48. Although the problem of drug abuse was minor in Nepal compared to other countries, her Government had formulated stringent programmes and strategies with a view to curbing the spread of narcotics. The Narcotic Drugs (Control) Act of 1976, formulated in response to the appeal made by from the United Nations to Member States, made the cultivation, production and trafficking of narcotic drugs illegal and punishable by stiff penalties. Her Government had also taken preventive, curative and rehabilitative measures aimed at curbing drug abuse and reintegrating the victims into society. The communications media were being used to educate the population, and particularly youth, of the adverse effects of drug consumption to their health and to their families. Several governmental as well as non-governmental organizations were providing services in rehabilitating the estimated 30,000 drug addicts known to exist in Nepal. The Government had earmarked financial resources in the current fiscal year for programmes designed to curb drug use and rehabilitate victims.

49. Rehabilitation was a costly endeavour and, in that area, her delegation felt that international non-governmental organizations could play a vital role in providing assistance to non-governmental organizations in Nepal. She expressed appreciation for the assistance provided by the relevant United Nations bodies in combating drug abuse in Nepal. An example of that assistance was the country workshop on drug abuse demand held in Kathmandu in August 1991, under the auspices of ESCAP.

50. In her delegation's view, there were two reasons for the unrelenting growth of narcotic abuse: the insatiable demand for drugs in the developed countries and extreme poverty in the developing countries. To combat the problem, the international community must adopt a two-pronged approach: suppression of the cultivation of narcotic plants in the developing countries and reduction of the demand for narcotic drugs in the industrialized countries. Farmers in the developing countries must be encouraged to join in economically profitable crop substitution programmes. Moreover, they must be assured of unrestricted access for their products in the markets of the developed countries. Moreover, all countries should forcefully implement the stringent law enforcement mechanisms called for in the relevant United Nations conventions. In that context, she recalled the World Ministerial Summit to Reduce the Demand for Drugs and to Combat the Cocaine Threat held in London. She also welcomed the signing of an agreement between the United States of America and Peru on drug control and alternative development policy.

51. Finally, her delegation welcomed the decision to unify the United Nations structures for drug abuse control through the establishment of UNIDCP. In

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that respect, the recommendations put forward by the Intergovernmental Expert Group to Study the Economic and Social Consequences of Illicit Traffic in Drugs were extremely important. Her delegation hoped that UNIDCP and the Commission on Narcotic Drugs would submit their recommendations to the General Assembly on the measures to be taken for implementing the recommendations of the Expert Group as soon as possible.

52. Her delegation considered that the proclamation of the period 1991-2000 as the United Nations Decade against Drug Abuse was a very timely decision and hoped that at a time when the super-Powers were improving their relations, a portion of the funds released from disarmament would be used in combating the plague of drug abuse.

53. Mr. MOULTRIE (Bahamas) said that the International Narcotics Control Board (INCB) continued to underscore the seriousness of the drug problem and to reaffirm its global character. The International Conference on Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking had adopted by consensus a decision that responsibility for international drug control should be shared. That Conference, together with the Conference of Plenipotentiaries and the seventeenth special session of the General Assembly, were significant not only for their political statements but also for the practical operational frameworks they had established: the Comprehensive Multidisciplinary Outline of Future Activities in Drug Abuse Control (CMO), the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, and the Global Programme of Action. The decision to select a group of experts to study the modalities for enhancing the United Nations structure for drug abuse control had underscored the determination of the Organization to play its central role in that task, despite the administrative and financial difficulties which it faced. The Group Experts had proposed the creation of a new structure encompassing the three existing drug units at Vienna.

54. In resolution 45/179, the General Assembly provided for the establishment of a single drug control programme known as the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNIDCP). His delegation had not had sufficient time for an in-depth consideration of the reports on the structure of the new programme (A/46/480 and A/C.5/46/23), and its observations were therefore only preliminary.

55. The Bahamas agreed that the Executive Director should be given the flexibility to determine the organizational structure of UNIDCP, and was therefore satisfied that the broad structure proposed by the Executive Director reflected the purpose for which the Programme had been created. UNIDCP consisted of a series of divisions, units, offices and services, which would permit both the rational use of experts and objectivity at every phase of the projects, without neglecting the importance of coherence and coordination in the system, which were considered priorities by the Executive Director. The expansion of the network of field offices placed technical services in affected countries and regions. The creation of regional bureaux

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should also facilitate the work of UNIDCP. The Technical Services Division would keep a roster of specialists available world wide on drug-related subjects. The Bahamas would provide UNIDCP with data on its own specialists, particularly in the treatment and rehabilitation of cocaine addicts.

56. Leadership and coordination were essential to the fulfilment of the multifaceted mandate of UNIDCP. Membership of the Executive Director in the Administrative Committee on Coordination would ensure the full coordination of the work of the Programme within the United Nations system. A more focused approach to inter-agency cooperation was developing, following the Inter-Agency Meeting on Coordination in Matters of Drug Abuse Control, held at Vienna and London earlier in the year, and steps had also been taken to enhance cooperation and coordination with other intergovernmental organizations.

57. During its 20 years of operation, the United Nations Fund for Drug Abuse Control had provided invaluable technical assistance and funding to developing countries to counteract the drug menace and the delegation of the Bahamas was confident that its successor, the Fund of the United Nations International Drug Control Programme, would be equally responsive to the needs of developing countries. In order to be effective, the Fund required more than modest backing and the Bahamas, which intended to contribute to the Fund, encouraged all other States to do so.

58. The role of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, as the principal drug policy-making body, was central to the operation of a comprehensive international drug-control strategy. At its first regular session, the Economic and Social Council had approved recommendations concerning the functioning of the Commission, including the convening of annual sessions of no more than eight days' duration, the establishment of a Committee to facilitate its work, and the increase in the Commission's membership from 40 to 53. The decision to increase its membership was particularly relevant in that it made possible a more equitable geographical distribution within the Commission. Additionally, his delegation believed that it would be counterproductive to give the Commission any additional function that was inconsistent with its mandate. The formulation and implementation of drug policy should be its forte.

59. UNIDCP had undertaken extensive activities simultaneously with its restructuring exercise. Progress had been made in the development of the International Drug Abuse Assessment System, which would provide epidemiological and treatment data world wide. The evaluation of 12 substitution projects currently under way should improve strategies in that area. In the Caribbean subregion to which the Bahamas belonged, projects in the area of demand reduction and law enforcement were of particular value.

60. It appeared, however, that the 1988 Convention had taken on a momentum of its own, having garnered some 49 States parties. The Bahamas continued to

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have a particular interest in the Convention's provisions pertaining to money laundering, extradition and mutual legal assistance. As a transit State, however, it wished to see a more detailed analysis of the most pronounced patterns of illicit transit trafficking, with a view to developing countermeasures to prevent it.

61. The Bahamas shared the view of the International Narcotics Control Board that law enforcement would continue to play a vital role in protecting society from the drug menace. It therefore supported efforts to improve the regional system of meetings of Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies (HONLEA) by ensuring that they undertook concrete tasks for effective law enforcement cooperation. His delegation would also continue to participate in the efforts by the Commission on Narcotic Drugs to determine the modalities of regional cooperation in demand reduction.

62. His delegation considered it vital that the Commission should reach a decision on follow-up action to the meeting of the Intergovernmental Expert Group to Study the Economic and Social Consequences of Illicit Traffic in Drugs, which had met in 1990. The matter was of particular importance to the developing countries.

63. By monitoring the production and distribution of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances so as to limit their use to medical and scientific purposes, INCB made a significant contribution to the effectiveness of national drug-control systems. All indications were that INCB approached its additional responsibilities under the 1988 Convention in the same manner. His delegation therefore supported the arrangements between the Board and the Executive Director of UNIDCP. The Bahamas intended to support the efforts of UNIDCP fully, and to cooperate with INCB and other States in efforts to curb the destructive phenomenon of drugs. Legalization of narcotic drugs was not an option.

The meeting rose at 4.40 p.m.